



# the BLACK ROSE

a regular news bulletin for the incarcerated | Issue 2 | October 2011

## Longshore Workers' Struggle Heats Up

LONGVIEW, WA - Hundreds of angry longshoremen stormed through a grain shipping terminal in Longview, Wash., early Thursday, September 8th, and held security guards at bay while descending on a disputed train full of grain, cutting brake lines and dumping cargo.

The predawn labor protests came after a clash with police the day before in which hundreds of longshoremen blocked railroad tracks near Vancouver, Wash., to prevent grain cargo from reaching an export terminal 45 miles farther west. In that protest, they far outnumbered officers, pelting police with rocks and spraying them with pepper spray, police said.

There have been no serious injuries, but 19 protesters were arrested on charges of trespassing during the initial protests Wednesday.

Police were not present during Thursday's predawn action at the terminal, but they said six security guards were held inside a guard shack while protesters attacked the train, broke windows in the shack and pushed a private security vehicle into a ditch.

Workers with the International Longshore Workers' Union are protesting the attempted use of non ILWU labor at the site by the company EGT. Their president was quoted as saying, "This constitutes an assault on over 80 years of longshore jurisdiction - an assault that could fundamentally change the dynamics of the relationship within the grain industry as a whole. It is critical to the Longshore Division that this does not happen."

Support from all along the west coast has begun to materialize, with ILWU chapters sending members to assist. Anarchists were present at a rally for longshore workers on September 29th, and have begun organizing solidarity events in the Northwest. Earlier that week a train line in southwest Washington that carries grain to Longview was shut down due to "tampering," according to police.

## "Occupy Wall St." Protests Spread Across the US

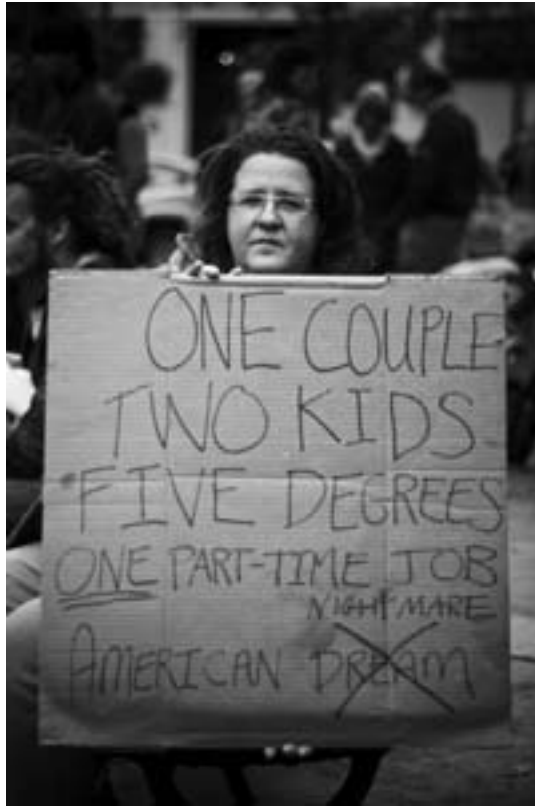
NEW YORK - On September 17th, hundreds of protesters gathered in the financial district of Manhattan to express their anger against high finance, banks, and the political elite. Modeled after elements of the Arab Spring, and in particular the occupation of Tahrir Square in Cairo and similar occupations across Europe, the protesters expressed a broad range of grievances against everything from money in politics to the system of capitalism.

Though most participants are young and new to political activism, the Occupy Wall St. movement has begun to attract support from broader segments of the population, in particular ex-middle class people hit

hard by the recession.

Since mid-September, hundreds of activists have continued to occupy a park in the financial district, sleeping in impromptu tents, holding marches, and hosting general assemblies twice a day. Their protest has begun to gain steam, as large unions and liberal figureheads like Michael Moore have expressed support. Police have attacked several of their marches, arresting as many as 700 people attempting to block the Brooklyn Bridge on October 1st. Despite the arrests, the tactic has begun to spread across the country, with dozens of similar "occupations" popping up around the US.

Though the overall sentiment could be generically termed "progressive," the diversity of opinions and grievances at these gatherings has been staggering, with participants expressing everything from revolutionary and anarchist positions to a desire



for simple reforms like higher taxes on the wealthy and more regulation of corporations. The Occupy Chicago group, for example, drew sharp criticism from the radical milieu for reaching out to police officers, while in other cities radicals are taking the lead in forming general assemblies and preventing co-optation by more liberal organizations.

## California Hunger Strike: Round 2

CALIFORNIA - On September 26th, prisoners across California resumed their hunger strike in protest of their five core demands, including changes in the segregated housing unit and the end of forced "debriefing"

policies. Within several days, the strike had spread to over 12,000 prisoners.

This number includes California prisoners who are housed in out of state prisons in Arizona, Mississippi and Oklahoma. This historic and unprecedented number shows the strength and resolve of the prisoners to win their 5 core demands and is a serious challenge to the power of the California prison system and to the Prison Industrial Complex in general.

Prisoners are currently on strike in Pelican Bay State Prison, Calipatria, Centinela, Corcoran, Ironwood State Prison, Kern Valley State Prison, North Kern State Prison, and Salinas Valley State Prison. Throughout the last week prisoners at California Rehabilitation Center in Norco, Pleasant Valley State Prison, San Quentin as well as West Valley Detention Center in San Bernadino County were participating.

Representatives of the hunger strikers have previously stated that this will be a rolling strike, allowing prisoners to come off strike to regain strength. Because of this, numbers will likely fluctuate throughout the duration of the strike.

Solidarity is encouraged in any form possible (not just hunger strikes), and organizing has begun again in earnest on the outside.

## Georgia Executes Troy Davis in the Face of Massive Protest

JACKSON, GA - The U.S. state of Georgia executed convicted murderer Troy Davis on Wednesday in a case that drew international attention because of claims by his advocates that he was innocent.

Davis was put to death by lethal injection at 11:08 p.m. ET on Thursday at a prison in central Georgia for the murder of a police officer in 1989, prisons spokeswoman Kristen Stancil said. The execution was delayed by more than four hours as the U.S. Supreme Court considered whether to issue a stay.

The case provoked protests and an online petition accumulated nearly a million signatures because of doubts expressed in some quarters over whether he killed police officer Mark MacPhail in 1989.

Since Davis's conviction, seven of nine witnesses have changed or recanted their testimony, some have said they were coerced by police to testify against him and some say another man committed the crime.

No physical evidence linked Davis to the killing, and Davis went to his death saying he was innocent, according to journalists who witnessed the execution.

"The incident that night was not my fault. I did not have a gun," Davis said, according to Rhonda Cook of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution newspaper.

Hundreds of protesters rallied outside Georgia Diagnostic and Classification prison earlier, chanting "I am Troy Davis" and other slogans and a cheer briefly went up when it was reported



that the execution had been delayed.

France and the Council of Europe earlier in the week urged U.S. authorities to stay the execution. Davis' supporters included the NAACP, former prison wardens and guards, and even former President Jimmy Carter.

But the state of Georgia and the Supreme Court decided to murder Troy Davis anyway. The crowd dwindled as the evening wore on, and by the time the execution took place they were outnumbered by police in riot gear. Most of Davis' supporters slipped away in silence as the execution was announced.

Defense attorney Thomas Ruffin put Davis' death in a racial and class context, declaring, "This night the state of Georgia legally lynched a brave, a good and indeed an innocent man."

## NORTH CAROLINA

### *Immigrants Arrested at 'Coming Out' Rally*

CHARLOTTE - On September 6th, Police arrested at least 10 young illegal immigrants as they blocked traffic near Central Piedmont Community College Tuesday to protest policies they say discriminate against undocumented immigrants.

Nearly 200 people met on CPCC's central campus for a 1 p.m. "coming out" rally in which some protesters publicly announced they're living in the country illegally.

The group then marched around the school toward the intersection of Kings Drive and Fourth Street. The large group proceeded to block all four directions of traffic while chanting "education, not deportation" and "undocumented and unafraid."

The Tuesday protest was organized by the N.C. Dream Team, a Raleigh-based group of students, most of whom live in the country illegally. They called for passage of the Dream Act - legislation that would provide a path to legalization for some young people brought to

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the U.S. illegally by their parents.

The students are known for a variety of tactics. They have organized rallies and hunger strikes, and have confronted legislators. This spring, they took part in a similar protest in Atlanta where two of their members were arrested and later released.

A total of 15 people were arrested at the Charlotte demonstration. Police said all were charged with impeding traffic and disorderly conduct. Two were also charged with violation of the noise ordinance.

### *PERT Assaults Prisoners and Confiscates Medications; Prisoner Suffers Heart Attack*

POLKTON - On August 16th the Assistant Superintendant of Lanesboro CI in Polkton, NC called in the Prison Emergency Response Team (PERT) to his facility. PERT is essentially a statewide riot squad designed specifically to respond to unrest at NC prisons.

PERT was called in, apparently, to respond to a protest by several prisoners on the Anson Unit (where maximum and intensive control status prisoners are held). Guards were continuously leaving their shifts without feeding the prisoners, and several prisoners responded to this by lighting fires on their unit.

Once called in, PERT maced, assault, and chained up prisoners on the unit, and then confiscated everything from personal items, books, and legal materials to essential medications and even bedding. In addition to preventing several practicing Muslims from participating in Ramadan, the confiscation resulted in one prisoner, who is on heart medication, having a heart attack. He was rushed to the hospital.

Though some of the property was returned, much has been misplaced due to guards' negligence.

**"Is there ever gonna be an end to the oppression of black people? I will make progress out of my struggle."**

### *Butner, NC Prisoners Announce Hunger Strike*

BUTNER - As of September 6th, North Carolina prisoner George Tyson went on indefinite hunger strike. The protest was aimed at conditions at the prison, which houses both youth as well as M-Con prisoners. In addition to quoting Frederick Douglass and protesting the "excessive force and physical brutality" he has himself suffered, Tyson's announcement of hunger strike mentions the July 14th beating-while-handcuffed of a prisoner at Central Prison in Raleigh, NC. This beating was also protested by death row prisoners at Central.

Tyson writes, "A Raleigh, NC Death Row prisoner was beaten while he had handcuffs on behind his back on July 14th at Central Prison. Is there ever gonna be an end to the oppression of black people? I will make progress out of my struggle."

Tyson also released a set of demands, which are as follows:

- 1) Provide shower mats outside the shower to prevent injury by slipping.
- 2) Provide wholesome nutritional food served in sanitary conditions.
- 3) Provide adequate medical care, including prompt responses to sick calls and seg checks on the well-being of locked up inmates.
- 4) Inmates with outdoor recreation are not getting the proper amount of sunlight and air. Some people's skin is starting to turn yellow and are getting outbreaks on their skin.
- 5) Prisoners should be able to have daily newspapers or radios to be able to hear the news.
- 6) Adequate remedy procedures and responses, with regards to grievance procedures. Guards are changing around prisoners' words and prisoners are not given adequate opportunities to respond.
- 7) We want at least monthly telephone contact with family.
- 8) An immediate stop to officers' taking prisoners' pillows and mattresses as punishment.
- 9) Emergency call buttons be placed on assigned blocks.

Many similar demands were made by an anarchist prisoner on hunger strike at a different facility in Polkton, NC in the month of July. This strike ultimately succeeded in winning several of the demands for prisoners on that block.

On September 20th, another Polk CI prisoner, Eli Alvarez, went on strike to protest similar conditions, as well as half-cooked food, unsanitary blankets, lack of medical care, and verbal and physical abuse by guards.

## SUBMIT YOUR NEWS!

Prisoners will be a large source of the news and updates for this bulletin. If you have any reportbacks or news from your facility, including reportbacks, relevant personal accounts, communiques, news, or proposals, please submit them to:

*News Bulletin*  
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